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INTRODUCTION

TO

THE WATER-CURE:

**A CONCISE EXPOSITION OF THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION; THE CONDITIONS OF
HEALTH; THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF DISEASE; THE LEADING SYSTEMS OF
MEDICINE; AND THE PRINCIPLES, PRACTICE, ADAPTATIONS, AND RE-
SULTS OF HYDROPATHY OR THE WATER-CURE; SHOWING IT
TO BE A SCIENTIFIC AND COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM FOR
THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF HEALTH;**

FOUNDED IN NATURE, AND ADAPTED TO THE WANTS OF MAN.

BY THOMAS L. NICHOLS, M.D.

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INTRODUCTION

TO

WATER-CURE.

OF THE SUBJECT AND THE AUTHOR.

THE TITLE of this work expresses its intention. There are many able treatises on WATER-CURE or HYDROPATHY, but it can not be expected that people will read them, until they have, in some way, become interested in the subject. To be interested in any person or thing, we must form some degree of acquaintance; and the usual way of making an acquaintance is by having an introduction. I have, therefore, taken it upon myself to introduce the reader to a knowledge of the nature, principles, and results of that system of curing diseases, and acquiring and preserving health, which is, from its chief agent, properly designated—the WATER-CURE.

But an introduction, to be well received, supposes some knowledge of the introducer; and where he is not already known, and has no one to introduce him, there comes the evident, though awkward necessity, that he should introduce himself. It seems proper, in this case, that I should give such an account of myself, as may enable the reader, to whom I am not in any way known already, to form an idea of my qualifications for the important task I have assumed. I say *important*—for his health, his happiness, his very existence may depend upon the impression which he may get from these pages. Feeling this, I earnestly entreat a candid perusal of what I am about to write. I wish to make it acceptable; but I write with the feeling that style, and taste, and literary merit, are all of trifling importance, compared with the great truths to which I would call the attention of intelligent minds.

I was born in the state of New Hampshire, where I commenced my medical education, under the instruction of Dr. M. R. Woodbury, about the year 1832. After the usual preparatory studies, I attended a course of medical lectures at Dartmouth College, in 1834, when the medical department of that ancient institution boasted at least two professors of some eminence; I mean the late Professor Oliver and Professor Muzzy, now of Cincinnati. With my preceptor, Dr. Woodbury, I saw, and to some extent assisted in something better than the usual routine of country practice; but, pleasant as I had found the study of medicine, its practice had no charms for me; and though I did not wholly abandon the desire to complete my course of study, I was never attracted to the "art of healing," as taught in the schools. I gave lectures on various subjects, particularly on Phrenology and Physiology; I wrote for the press; and finally, for more than twelve years, worked steadily as editor and author. In all this period I found my medical knowledge of great use to me. I preserved my own health, I gave advice to others, I wrote much upon sanitary reforms. These writings, generally unconnected with my name, have had a very wide circulation, and, as I believe, considerable influence.*

My attention was first called to the Water-Cure, by the celebrated letter of Bulwer, which was an earnest and enthusiastic, but in some respects mistaken advocacy of the system. From that time, I read such works upon the subject as came in my way, but was too much absorbed in my editorial duties to give it much attention. In 1838, I became acquainted with Mrs. Mary S. Gove, whom I had known by reputation as an eminent lecturer and writer. Her "Lectures to Ladies on Anatomy and Physiology," published by the Harpers in 1846, established her scientific reputation; while her novels, tales, and poems, would have given her a wide literary celebrity, had they not been published either anonymously or under a *nomme de plume*. I found her, not only a lady of high literary and scientific attainments, respected and beloved by all who knew her, but the most scientific and successful of Water-Cure physi-

Among my later writings are my editorial articles during two years, in the New York "Dispatch," and the "Universe;" a historical work, entitled "Woman in all Ages and Nations;" the "Religions of the World;" and "The World's Reformers," in the same papers, not yet published in book form; a series of articles on "The Science of Life," in the "Monthly Bulletin;" a series on "Sanitary Laws," and another on "The Curiosities of Medical Science," in the "Sunday Times;" and various others.

cians. A new light broke upon my career—the mingled rays of love and wisdom. My destiny was joined to hers, in the holiest of bonds; and our studies and work, as well as our lives, lay henceforth in the same track.

Every day I saw, and heard of, the triumphs of Water-Cure. Taking charge of the male patients of our establishment, I saw the practice, while I diligently read the theory in the works of the best writers; I also gained no little knowledge in assisting to prepare for the press the “Experience in Water-Cure,” written by Mrs. Nichols, and lately published. And, as if Providence had determined to take every stumbling-block out of my way, at this period, my two partners conspired to plunder me of my share in the proprietorship of a newspaper, of which I had been for two years an editor; and I was left, with a loss of some thousands of dollars, by this piece of unimaginable rascality, to enter without hindrance upon the professional career so strangely marked out for me, and into which I was at once attracted and driven.

As a first step to success in that career, I resolved to complete my regular education as prescribed by law; and for that purpose I attended my second course of lectures in the Medical Department of the University of New York, where, after some five hundred lectures and clinics, by Professors Mott, Pattison, Payne, Dickson, Bedford, and Draper, I presented my credentials, passed the required examination, and received the diploma of my degree of Doctor of Medicine.

Nor did I think even this full and legal course of regular education in medicine and surgery sufficient. With a competent knowledge of the allopathic system of practice, as certified by the highest authorities, I have carefully examined the systems of Hahnemann and Dickson—Homœopathy and Chrono-Thermalism—and have seen some practice in the former. In an earnest love for Truth as the greatest good, with a strong desire for usefulness, I have attentively considered these leading systems and doctrines of medicine, and have deliberately adopted that which I believe to be not only the best, but the only system founded in nature and adapted to the wants of man.

With this conviction, my duty is clear. With knowledge that can benefit my fellow creatures, I am impelled to use it. Knowing the truth, I have no right to conceal it. Thousands around me are ignorantly sacrificing health and life—thousands are suffering from disease and pain—thousands are cut off in the flower and prime of

existence ; and I should stand condemned of my own conscience, and accursed of God, if, knowing the means of preserving health, of curing disease, and saving life, I neglected to use them.*

These means are all comprised in what is called Hydropathy, but which I prefer to term the **WATER-CURE**. The name must not be received in any narrow sense. It means more than giving sick people plunge baths, wet sheet packs, and douches. It comprehends, in the sense in which I shall use it, a knowledge of the relations of man to the universe. It is a central science ; a pivotal system ; the desideratum of progress, and the basis of reforms.

OF HEALTH AND DISEASE.

HEALTH is the natural condition of every organized being. It is that condition in which all animals enjoy the highest development, beauty, vigor, and happiness. It is a state of harmony with nature, and a fulfillment of the ends of creation.

The same laws of life apply to all organized beings. Their natural condition is one of health during all their progress up to maturity ; their only natural disease is the slow decay which precedes dissolution. Vegetables, animals, and men, are governed by the same organic laws.

Let a plant spring from a perfect seed, in a well adapted soil, with the proper moisture, temperature, and electrical conditions, and it will be healthy, well developed, and beautiful. Change any of these conditions, and it will be diseased, stunted, and short-lived.

The animals, in their natural state, are full of health and vigor. Confined, pampered, and abused by man, they grow sick and short-lived. Our horses, oxen, sheep, and swine are the prey of diseases arising from the unnatural lives to which we subject them, and which they never know in a state of nature. The wild horse needs no veterinary surgeon, the buffalo needs no cow doctor.

Man is an animal, with the same tissues and organs as the whole class of mammalia to which he belongs. Like them he has bones, muscles, blood-vessels, and nerves. Like them he has senses, powers of locomotion, organs of nutrition, of reproduction, and of thought. He is, like them, hungry and thirsty ; subject to heat and cold. Like them he has his origin, his gradual development, his maturity, his gradual decay, and finally he dies when his race

* To withhold from society facts regarding health, is a sort of felony against the common rights of human nature.—*Dr. Lambe.*

is accomplished. Such is the law of nature ; but very different, in some of these things, is the sad reality of fact.

Every plant and every animal has a certain period of existence assigned to it by nature. There are plants and animals whose entire existence lasts but a few hours. The oak endures for centuries. The antediluvian life of man is said to have been as long as that of the oak, and it is predicted that in some future period " his life shall be as the life of a tree." What is the present term of man's existence ? Three score years and ten is set down as its ordinary limit ; but there is no law which confines it to that, for we have all around us persons of eighty, ninety, and a hundred. We have rare cases, indeed, in which men live to one hundred and fifty, and, it is said, even two hundred years, at the present day.

The natural life of man, then, may be from seventy to a hundred years ; and those who go over or fall short of these periods, must be set down as exceptions to a general law. Every plant, every animal, enjoying proper conditions, ought, accidents excepted, to reach the period of existence it is fitted by nature to attain. We should think that a bad field of corn in which not one stalk in a hundred came to maturity ; we should think that a bad breed of animals of which one half should die in infancy, and nineteen-twentieths before old age. In one case, we should suspect that the seed was bad, the soil inadapted, the climate insalubrious, or the cultivation poor ; in the other, we should think we had been imposed upon by a worthless breed, or that our animals were placed in unnatural conditions.

The natural condition of the human animal is a healthy birth, a robust and happy infancy, a joyous youth, a vigorous maturity, a calm old age, and a painless death. This is nature ; and it is the instinctive desire of every human being. It is what man is fitted for in his anatomy and physiology. It is in harmony with all nature around him. It is his proper destiny ; and every other life than this is a violation of the will of God, as revealed in His own universe.

Men are subject to disease and premature death, the same as all organized beings are, and in no other way. The plant may be crushed, or a drouth may wither it. The worm may be trodden upon, or the lamb become the prey of the tiger. Men, like all other animals, may be burned with fire, drowned with water, or frozen with cold. All animals may be diseased with poisons, and

men may, if they choose, shorten their lives in many ways; but these are all violations of the great laws of life.

The natural state of man, as of all plants and animals, is one of uninterrupted health. The only natural death is the gradual and painless decay of old age. Such a life and death are in happy harmony with nature; pain, and disease, and premature mortality are the results of violated laws. I can not insist upon this too strongly. Every pain we feel, every distress we suffer, is but the sign that some law of our being has been outraged. All sickness is a discord with nature—health is harmony.

Health, moreover, is the condition of beauty and happiness. Every organized being is beautiful in its perfect development, and health is the sole condition of such development. We have, from similar causes, dwarfed, stunted, and miserable trees, animals, men, and women. All animals are happy in the free exercise of their faculties, and there can be no such exercise without health. In health, every period of life and every phase of existence is full of happiness.

OF THE CONDITIONS OF HEALTH.

It is admitted that health is the natural state of man, and it must be, unless we can conceive that nature has made a woful blunder in his organization, what are the conditions in which all his functions are harmoniously performed? In other words, what are the conditions of health?

A plant requires a good seed or germ, a good soil, a suitable degree of moisture, free access to air, light, and a proper temperature. An animal requires, also, a sound germ, healthy food, light, air, a proper temperature, and the exercise of its faculties and passions. The plant draws its food from the soil; the animals draw theirs directly or indirectly from vegetables. The stomach of the animal answers to the soil of the plant. The plant extends its absorbent vessels after food in the earth—we bring food within reach of our absorbents, by conveying it into the stomach. Plants and animals alike need light, air, and moisture, and can not be developed without them.

Man, the head of the animal kingdom, demands, then, for his proper development, or for health—first, that he be well born, the child of healthy parents; second, that he be well fed with nutriment adapted to his digestive organs, in kind and quantity; third, that he breathe pure air; fourth, that he live in the light; fifth,

that he gratify the instinct of cleanliness, and so keep his skin in proper condition; sixth, that his muscular powers have due and pleasant exercise; seventh, that his intellectual faculties and social affections are developed in harmony with the ends of his existence.

The conditions of health are few and simple. They are in accordance with our own unperverted instincts, and may be learned of our near relations, the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. The life of a bird or beast, in its natural state, is one of simple conformity to nature, and health and fullness of days are the consequences. Let man be as true to his nature as are the unperverted beings around him, and he would be as healthy and proportionally as long-lived.

What! would you have us live in a state of nature? Assuredly. Would you violate nature? God made us as He made all nature, and His works should be in harmony. But, by a state of nature, I do not mean a savage or barbarous state. There are other vices than those of civilization, and other perversions of nature than its so-called refinements. What man really wants, for health, may be comprised in a few words. A good constitution, simple food, cleanliness, a pure air, proper shelter and clothing, exercise, freedom from care, refining pursuits and recreations, and happy domestic relations.

HEALTH, being the result of the regular performance of all the functions of life, any variation from such regularity is disease. Health gives full and beautiful development; the want of such development is a symptom of disease or disordered function. Health is characterized by vigor; weakness and indolence are the effects of disease. In health we have "strength of body, serenity of mind, and a keen enjoyment of all the blessings of life." In disease we have weakness of body, perturbation of mind, and so much pain and distress that life often becomes a burden.

As the natural condition of all living things is one of health—as health may itself be defined as the *fullness of life*—so are they all subject to disease. A plant in a barren soil has but a sickly growth; deprived of moisture, it withers; kept from the air, it suffocates; in darkness, it has neither color nor strength. Take away the conditions of health, and it is subject to disease and death. It is the same with animals, the same with man.

All organized beings are endowed with a principle of vitality or life. It is in vain that we try to understand this principle. All we

know of it, is learned from observing its effects. It has intimate relations with light, oxygen, and electricity, or galvanism. This principle of life, contained in the germ of the plant or animal, presides over its development to maturity ; and when this principle is exhausted, the result is death ; when it is weakened or obstructed, the result is disease. Disease, then, may be considered the struggle of the principle of life against morbid agencies.

The constitutions of organized beings are adapted to the relations of this life principle with the elements of nature. In temperatures varying from twenty degrees below zero to one hundred or more above, the life principle keeps the temperature of the human body at ninety-eight degrees, with slight variations. Deprive the human body of life, and it would quickly broil or freeze in such temperatures. This is one of many examples of the influence of the life principle. The force of our vitality marks the measure of our health ; its continuance makes the duration of our lives. The secret of health and long life, then, is the preservation of the energy of this vital principle.

Strictly speaking, there is but one disease ; or, we may say that all the forms of disease, arising from a multitude of causes, come from one central source—a weakening of the nervous energy or principle of life ; as all the varied forms of death may be resolved into the destruction of this principle. An acute disease, as a fever, is a quick, sharp struggle of a vigorous vitality to overcome or cast out some diseasing influence. A chronic disease is a weaker and more protracted effort for the same purpose. Pain is, at once, the friendly monitor, to warn us of evil influences, and the chastisement of nature for some violation of her laws. A headache or toothache, the gout or rheumatism, is just as natural and inevitable, and just as much a sign that we have violated some law of our being, as the pain which comes from our putting our hands in the fire, or screwing them in a vice.

OF THE HUMAN SYSTEM.

I HAVE little room for the details of anatomy and physiology ; but all that is necessary may be given in a few words. The human system, complete, harmonious, admirable in its adaptations, wonderful in its displays of creative wisdom, though each part is inseparably connected with and necessarily dependent upon every other, may yet be divided into three parts—the **NUTRITIVE SYSTEM**, the **ACTIVE**, and the **REPRODUCTIVE**. Under the nutritive system, I

comprehend all the organs which build up, support, and strengthen the body ; as the stomach and intestinal canal, the lacteals and absorbents, the heart, arteries, and veins, the liver, lungs, skin, glands, lymphatics, etc. The system of action comprehends the apparatus of thought, passion, and motion, including the brain, spinal chord, nerves, and muscles. The reproductive system has its own peculiar organs, the proper development and healthy condition of which are of the highest importance to the individual and the race. Over all these presides the principle of life, which seems to reside in a nervous system of its own, which pervades the entire system.

The health and energy of the whole nutritive system, it will be seen, is absolutely necessary to the growth, development, and vigor of every organ of the body, its own included ; for as the heart supplies itself with blood, as the arteries and veins have their own vessels, so all the organs of nutrition are obliged to supply continually the waste of their own action. All action is accompanied by waste. The steam-engine can no more be propelled without a loss of steam—the water-mill can no more move without an expenditure of water—than any thought or action of our bodies can take place without an actual loss, both of vital power, and of the matter of which the various tissues of our system is composed. This is why thought fatigues our brains, and exercise, our muscles. This is why we need repose and sleep. It is the office of the function of nutrition to continually supply this waste matter of the system. This is why we require food every day and air every moment.

Not only must new matter be constantly supplied to the entire system, bones, muscles, nerves, etc., but the waste matter must be constantly carried away. Once used up, it is foreign matter in the system, clogging and poisoning it. It passes off through the lungs, the kidneys, the intestinal canal, and especially through the skin. It is easy to see that a vigorous and active state of every organ connected with the function of nutrition, is of the last necessity to a healthy condition.

It is of absolute necessity to health that the brain and muscular system should have proper exercise. With too little, the mind grows dull, and the muscles weak and flabby. Tasked too much, the head is wearied and the strength of the muscular system overtasked. We must have activity and enjoyment ; we must avoid indolence on the one hand, and on the other, all excess of labor or pleasure.

The importance of the reproductive system is scarcely enough

dwelt upon. It gives us flowers and fruit in the vegetable world, it prolongs the races of animals, and greatly influences the character of individuals of the human race. It is connected, in some mysterious way, with all that is *manly* in man and all that is *womanly* in woman. Deprived of this function men are effeminate and women coarse. Its disorder affects the whole system, its abuses sap the fountains of life.

OF THE CAUSES OF DISEASE.

AS HEALTH requires that all these functions be maintained in vigor and harmony of development, disease must inevitably arise from the want of such a condition; and we can now go understandingly into a consideration of the causes of the various forms of disease.

The first cause of disease is hereditary transmission or predisposition. A child may be born actually diseased, as with syphilis, scrofula, salt-rheum, tubercles in the lungs, etc., derived from the father or mother, or with such a weakened vitality that it can not resist the common diseasing influences. A diseased father can not beget, a diseased mother can not bring forth, a healthy child. A child, the very germ of whose existence is depraved, who partakes, for the nine months of its fetal life, of the weakness, pain, and suffering of a sick mother, whose very life-blood is made of bad food and impure air, narcotics and medicinal poisons, and who continues to live for some months longer on the same unhealthy nutriment, drawn from her breast, has a poor chance for life, and none at all for a healthy existence.

The period of infancy past, impure, insufficient, or excessive nutrition is one of the great causes of disease. All vegetables feed upon gasses or their combinations, certain chemical principles found in air, water, and the soil in which they grow. All animals live upon the substances thus elaborated by vegetables. Some animals live directly upon vegetables, others get the same materials indirectly, by eating other animals. The order of animals to which man belongs is naturally frugivorous, or fruit eating; hence our best sustenance is derived from fruits, grains, roots, nuts, etc. To these we add milk, eggs, fishes, the flesh of animals, etc. A large portion of the human race lives entirely upon vegetables; a very small portion lives almost entirely upon animal food. We can live far better on vegetable food without animal, than we can on animal, without vegetable. The more the vegetable preponderates

over the animal, the purer is our diet, and the better adapted to health—and health is vigor of body and mind. The best flesh contains about twenty-five per cent. of nutritive matter—the best vegetables, such as wheat, corn, and rice, contain eighty or ninety per cent. Vegetable food is the purest, as it is the cheapest, human nutriment.

An impure diet conveys morbid matter into the system. Unhealthy vegetables and animals are alike unfit for food. Animals, fattened for the market, are often full of scrofula and other diseasing matter, and those who eat their flesh can not avoid their diseases. This is especially the case with pork, and generally with animal fat, which should always be avoided.

An insufficient diet, not properly sustaining the organs of life, leads to disease, decay, and death. Want of food causes typhus fever, consumption, and a general weakness and breaking up of the system.

But excess is a far more frequent cause of disease. Gluttony kills hundreds where one dies of starvation. A single ounce more of food than we need for our proper nutrition, tasks the vital powers and weakens the system. Eating too fast and eating too much, are our greatest vices; and these are caused, in a great degree, by an artificial cookery and the use of condiments and spices.

The only drink is pure water. All that we join to it is one of two things—it is either food or poison. Milk and sugar are food, coffee, tea, and alcohol, in all its forms, are poisons. They excite, weaken, and deprave. They belong to the same class of substances as opium and tobacco, and none of them can be used in any quantity without an exactly corresponding amount of mischief. This is a hard saying, but it is God's own truth. All science proclaims it, and all experience confirms it. Let each one take it to his own conscience, remembering that every violation of nature is a sin that inevitably brings its punishment. Such are the laws of the universe.

Breathing an air deprived of its proper proportion of oxygen, by being breathed over, or by other processes of combustion, or loaded with foul gasses and emanations, is another common source of disease. At every beating of the heart, blood is sent into the lungs, where it receives oxygen from the air we breathe, and there can be no healthy blood unless this is supplied in its fullness and purity. Any diminution is a cause of disease—privation is death. Morbid matter contained in the air, enters the lungs and poisons

the vast surface of millions of air vessels. Can we wonder at the terrible effects of miasma and the crowd poison, as the air of crowded and unventilated ships, jails, and hospitals? Our churches, theaters, and concert rooms are often as bad, only we do not breathe in them so long. Few of our dwellings, and especially our sleeping rooms, are sufficiently ventilated, and the whole atmosphere of large cities is poisoned by a thousand nuisances, made by cupidity and permitted by ignorance.

Exercise without fatigue, thought without care, enjoyment without excess, are all conditions of health, and the deprivation or violation of any of these conditions, may be the cause of disease. In all these things, in all that belongs to the active functions of life, we require pleasant labor, variety, and cheerful excitement. Our social instincts must, also, be gratified. Solitude, disappointed love, or ambition, and unhappy associations, may be causes of disease. The mind and body act reciprocally on each other. Both must be healthy or both will be diseased.

The reproductive system has its own special diseases, and any irregularity in its functions affects the whole body. This is more markedly the case in the female than the male. Four fifths of all the diseases of women are connected with derangements of the reproductive system. The excesses and abuses of this function, in both sexes, cause an untold amount of disease and suffering.

The want of personal cleanliness is a common cause of disease. In a general sense, this has already been mentioned, for eating impure food, or breathing impure air, filled with fetid and disgusting emanations is, surely, a great lack of cleanliness; but, in its special sense, the want of personal cleanliness weakens that great cleansing organ, the skin, clogs its myriads of pores, through which the effete matter of the system should be constantly thrown off, and by this means the whole system becomes filled with a rank poison, which deranges its whole action, and in the struggle which ensues, often overpowers the vital energy. Health and purity are synonymous terms. An impure system must be a diseased one. The whole skin requires its daily bath of cold water, as the eye wants light, the lungs, pure air, and the stomach, healthy food. How many thousands wash their faces and hands every day, without thinking that every square inch of their skin needs ablution as much, and would be as much refreshed by it!

There are other causes of disease, connected with clothing, sleep, and other artificial habits, such as tight lacing, living in dark-

ness, and turning night into day, exhausting excitements, unhealthy employments, etc., but they are generally comprehended in the preceding observations; there is, however, one cause of disease, which, though it will be treated of hereafter, I can not pass over here without notice. I mean the administration of drugs for medicinal purposes. Under the common or allopathic system of medicine, we are poisoned from before our birth, through our whole existence, and very often ignorantly and heedlessly poisoned to death. Poisons, of the most horrible kind, are sent to the unborn babe in the blood of its mother; poisons are commonly sucked in with the mother's milk, even such as opium, antimony, arsenic, calomel, and corrosive sublimate. Children are poisoned with pargoric or laudanum, and made to swallow filthy, nauseous, and poisoning drugs, through all the diseases of infancy; and in this way are laid up in their bodies the causes of future aches, pains, depressions, dyspepsias, epilepsies, and a whole train of disorders. It is a matter of grave doubt with the most eminent members of the medical profession, whether they do not kill more than they cure, and whether the general effect of medicine is not to shorten life.* I have long been past all doubt on that point, and every day's observation satisfies me that the drug medication of the present day is a potent cause of disease and premature death. I am well satisfied that mankind would not only be far better off were the whole medical profession, and all knowledge of the use of drugs, swept out of existence, but that many diseases would disappear, and the average period of human life be greatly lengthened.

There are diseases which are the result of virus, as of a rattlesnake, or the bite of a rabid animal, and the virus of syphilis. These may be classed with those produced by mercury, quinine, antimony, opium, and the other violent poisons of the *materia medica*. There is also a class of contagious diseases, as measles, small-pox, and some would add yellow fever, plague, and cholera. These all appear to be the offspring of those artificial habits of life

* "A monarch, who could free his state from this pestilent set of physicians and apothecaries, and entirely interdict the practice of medicine, would deserve to be placed among the most illustrious characters who have ever conferred benefits on mankind. There is scarcely a more dishonest trade imaginable than medicine in its present state."—Dr. FORTH.

It is a curious fact that the two poisons, opium and mercury, were introduced into the medicine of Europe by "a malignant quack and drunken vagabond, who rejoiced in the resounding name of Aurelius Phillipus Hohenheim Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus." Yet no two medicines are now so often given, and no other two have produced such lamentable results.

which we call civilization. Some are of comparatively recent date, and all belong to unhealthy conditions. To those who obey the laws of life, they have no terrors. The victims of all these diseases are those who violate, or in whom are violated, the conditions of health. They are severe and fatal just in proportion as vitality is weak and loaded down with the causes of disease. It is doubtful whether any truly healthy person can take one of this class of diseases.

OF SICKNESS AND MORTALITY.

LET us see to what extent these causes of disease produce their appropriate effects. In any proper conformity to natural laws, health and long life would be the rule ; and disease and premature death the exception. Human ignorance and perversity have reversed the rules of life, and those greatest of blessings, health and longevity, are the rare exceptions in human history.

The statistics of human mortality have a melancholy completeness. About one fourth of all the children born in all civilized countries, die within the first eleven months of their existence. One half die before they reach their eighth year. Two thirds die before the thirty-ninth year. Three fourths before the fifty-first. According to Buffon, only one in nine, of all that are born, reaches the age of seventy-three, and only one in thirty lives to eighty ; one in twelve thousand lives to a hundred.

In large cities, where people are crowded together in poverty and filth, where none of the conditions of health exist, and where the causes of disease are multiplied, the mortality is far greater. In London, according to the tables of Dr. Price, half the number born, die under three years of age ; in Vienna and Stockholm, under two. The proportion of those who die annually in the great towns of Europe, is one nineteenth or twentieth of the whole population. In all these cities, improved conditions, such as widened streets, sewerage, and greater attention to cleanliness, have improved the public health. In New York the annual mortality is about one in thirty-seven.

There are some good people who believe that God sends our diseases, and appoints the hour of our death, though our diseases are caused by our own gluttony and intemperance, and our deaths are hastened by the bleeding and drugs of the doctors. But how is it that in one quiet place in the country, one in every eleven or twelve reaches the age of eighty, while in London not more than

one in sixty attains to the same age? Is there one Providence for the town and another for the country, or do disease and death obey certain laws of God's appointment?

In the city of New York, in 1847, there were 15,788 deaths, of which 7,373 were of children under five years of age. In 1848 the deaths were 15,919, of which 8,899 were children!

In the single month of March, 1850, there died in New York 1,107 persons, of whom 518 were under five years of age.

We have no record of the amount of sickness, but we may suppose twenty cases of sickness to one of death, or an average mortality of five per cent. in all diseases. This would make three hundred thousand cases of disease annually in the city of New York, and this would correspond pretty nearly to the number of medical men and the amount of their professional business.

Taking the month of March, 1850, as an example, we have the following statistics of the various diseases which proved mortal. Of the 1,107 deaths, 308, or nearly one third, were from diseases of the lungs; 77, diseases of the bowels; 124, of fevers, and so on. Taking our former estimate, there were in the month of March, over twenty-two thousand cases of sickness in the city of New York.*

Where shall we lay the blame of this disease and death? Shall we charge it upon a mysterious Providence, when abundant causes exist in our violations of the laws of life? Shall we blame the Almighty for the consequences of our disobedience of His laws? No: let us not add this blasphemy to our other sins. In our ignorance and recklessness we bring upon ourselves all this misery, disease, and death; and the sin of ignorance, in the disregard of natural law, never goes unpunished. Fire burns, water drowns, bad food, bad air, uncleanly habits, and the use of poisons, either as stimulants or medicines, shorten our lives and render them wretched. These are sins that can not be forgiven. The true record of the sins of a people may be found in the bills of mortality!

The varied forms of disease seem to be determined by age and circumstances, rather than by the causes that produce them. In infancy we have marasmus, cholera infantum, and convulsions, all diseases of a weak vitality struggling with morbid agencies. Then

* Out of the whole population of New York, how many persons are there who ever enjoy full and uninterrupted health for a year, or for six months together? What people call "pretty well, I thank you," and "well, middling," and "so as to be crawling," is not what we call **HEALTH**.

come measles, hooping cough, scarlet fever, and dysentery ; stronger efforts of the vital energy to cast out the matter of disease. Then come other fevers, inflammations, apoplexy, consumption, and the long train of chronic diseases that gradually wear out our lives. All diseases, according to the chrono-thermal doctrine, belong to the single type of intermittent fever, varying in local lesions, according to the weakness of particular organs. The great mass of diseases, according to Hahnemann, is caused by morbid matter in the system. According to one school of allopathists, the humors are depraved ; the solids are affected, according to another ; a third class makes all disease depend upon a loss of nervous power. They are all right ; for a loss of nervous energy must deprave both fluids and solids, and allow of the accumulation of morbid matter in the system.

OF THE ART OF HEALING.

BEFORE speaking of the Water-Cure as a medical system, let us take a brief glance at the present condition of the art of healing, as practiced by some of the leading sects of our medical faculty. The common qualifications of a physician, are a knowledge of anatomy and physiology, surgery, and the theory and practice of medicine and midwifery. The anatomy is useful in performing surgical operations and making post-mortem examinations. Physiology is seldom understood, and in some of our highest medical colleges makes no part of the regular course of education. We come, then, to the practice of medicine, surgery, and obstetrics.

The common medical treatment, in allopathic practice, consists of bleeding, vomiting, purging, counter-irritation, stimulation, palliation, and the administration of alteratives and tonics. Blood-letting, by the lancet, the cupping-glass, or by leeches, is continually resorted to, and the healths of thousands are undermined, and thousands of lives sacrificed by this barbarous practice. The circulation becomes disordered in the struggle of nature, which we call disease, and our doctors know no better method than to let out the vital fluid, and subtract so much from the strength and life of the patient, a practice never necessary, always dangerous, and often fatal. It has been well said, that the lancet has slaughtered more men than the sword. The homeopaths, the chrono-thermalists, all the reformed schools of medicine, renounce and denounce blood-letting. In Water-Cure, the most violent inflammations are controlled without it, with perfect ease ; and our recov-

eries are proportionally rapid and complete. The physician who bleeds now, belongs to the dark ages ; yet, with few exceptions, all allopathic doctors still bleed, and their patients die accordingly, or linger miserably through a long convalescence, and never fully recover.

Vomiting and purging are produced by the most violent poisons of the *materia medica*, such as antimony and mercury, poisons which can never be introduced into the human system without great and irreparable mischief. Men, drugged in their childhood, carry the effects of their poisonings to their graves, often pining through years of pain, and dying prematurely and miserably. In Water-Cure we relieve the stomach and bowels with simple water, and do away with all necessity for other emetics or cathartics ; for water answers every useful purpose of both.

Counter-irritation is a way of relieving some internal pain or disease, by producing a greater one upon the surface. It is done by blisters, mustard plasters, moxas, antimonial ointment, croton oil, or some other way of burning or poisoning. It is a miserable system of torture, which we entirely dispense with, having much better and more effectual means of relieving pain and congestion. In Water-Cure, we excite a vigorous action of the whole surface of the body, instead of burning and destroying any portion of it. Our wet-sheet packing is worth a hundred blisters, even were we to allow that the latter were ever useful. If they ever were, they are now fortunately superceeded by a process at once pleasant and efficacious.

Stimulants are medicines given to excite the whole system or some particular organ. They are uniformly poisons, which the energy of the whole system is roused to expel, and exhaustion is the necessary consequence of this unnatural stimulation. It is the strength of the drunkard, which soon gives place to prostration. The poisons given to produce it are always liable to be retained in the system, aggravating all the causes of disease. In Water-Cure, we rely solely upon the vigor and recuperative energy of nature, with her natural stimulants of water, air, exercise, and a pure diet. All the strength gained is real, and there is no going backward in the cure. Tonics are a kind of stimulants, acting more slowly but upon the same principles, and they are liable to the same objections.

The palliatives of allopathy, consist chiefly of the vegetable narcotics, at the head of which are opium, and, according to Professor

Dickson, quinine. They are medicines that allay pain, and control diseased action, by their deadening influence. They change disease, but never cure it. These are the favorite remedies of the profession, but they are never given but to purchase present ease at the expense of future misery. All medicines of this class are violent poisons, and can not be taken with impunity. One who takes them, has as much need to be cured of his medicines as he had of his disease.

The alteratives consist chiefly of the most deadly poisons, given in small doses, so as to have a gradual effect in changing the action of the system, and the seat of disease. They consist chiefly of calomel, arsenic, antimony, corrosive sublimate, iodine, etc., articles whose natural action is to destroy life, which they never fail to do, more or less rapidly, according to the extent to which they are administered. Water-Cure produces all the effects which are vainly hoped from these medicines, simply, and in beautiful harmony with the laws of nature and the constitution of man.

The whole system of allopathy is one of weakening and poisoning. Every good it gains, is by the infliction of some mischief. Its evils are acknowledged by its ablest teachers; but they are taught as necessary evils. Water-Cure has demonstrated the contrary. We have shown, by thousands of cures, of the most hopeless cases, and in all manner of diseases, that this whole system of bleeding, torturing, nauseating, and poisoning, is as unnecessary as it is destructive.*

But shall we not respect the accumulated wisdom of three thousand years? ask the upholders of this system. Where, I ask, is the wisdom for us to respect? I see nothing but an accumulation of absurdities and barbarities. I must respect, in medicine, that which saves life, and not that which destroys it. "The accumulated wisdom of three thousand years!" Look at the diseased

* Among the allopathic medicines in common use, we have the *paralyzers*, aconite and hemlock, and the *convulsives*, strychnia and prussic acid, and the *delirifacients*, henbane, stramonium, and deadly night-shade; seven poisons, the most virulent and sudden in the whole kingdom of nature. Using these, we can only wonder that the virus of the rattlesnake, or the saliva of hydrophobia was not added to the list, and dealt out to suffering invalids on the authority of formal recipes. Next to these we have the less active, but still powerful poisons, opium, cinchona, digitalis, scammony, gamboge, hellebore (correctly characterized by its first and very mildly by its last syllable), croton oil, colocynth, and a long list of vegetable poisons; as if the whole vegetable kingdom had been ransacked, and when any substance was found, fetid to the smell, nauseous to the taste, and deadly in its action, it follows that men must take it for medicine—for health.—*Democratic Review*.

humanity around us ; look at the bills of mortality ; look at generation after generation, cut off in the very spring-time of life, and then talk of wisdom or science !

The practice of surgery, in its mechanical or operative department, has made respectable progress, and achieved some brilliant triumphs ; but in the saving of life and limb ; in preventing the necessity of operations and mutilations, by the cure of disease, it has miserably failed. Resorting to the same system of depletion and poisoning, it has had the same want of success. The Water-Cure is destined to effect a great and happy revolution in this department. With its power of absolutely controlling inflammation, and imparting the highest vigor and activity to the powers of life, thousands of limbs will be saved, that are now sacrificed, and diseases cured which baffle all the resources of an art in which, hitherto, failure has been the rule, success the exception. In such diseases as cancer, hip-disease, white-swelling, and other scrofulous affections, the Water-Cure is successful beyond all expectation—I need not say beyond all example.

The other systems of medical practice in vogue require a brief notice. Homeopathia is a great improvement on allopathia, if we neither admit its principles, nor credit the potency of its medicines. It prescribes an excellent dietetic system, which of itself is sufficient, with time and nature, to cure many diseases. Its medicines are given in too minute doses, to have the poisonous effects of allopathic drugging, and it uses neither bleeding, blisters, nor emetics. All these are great negative improvements, and quite sufficient of themselves, to account for the superior success claimed by homeopathic physicians.

The leading principle of homeopathy is given in the Latin phrase, *similia similibus curantur* ; which means that medicines cure a disease or a symptom, in virtue of their power of producing a similar one in a healthy person. So, to cure any morbid affection, the homeopaths give some poison which would produce one of a similar character. To cure headache, they give some drug which would cause it—and so of affections of the stomach, lungs, etc. In cholera, they give copper and white hellebore ; in inflammation of the stomach, arsenic, or corrosive sublimate, and so on. But these poisons are not given in appreciable doses ; not in grains, or twentieths of grains, not ordinarily even in thousandths. The usual doses range from the ten millionth to the decillionth of a

grain. In Hahnemann's Organon of Medicine, which is the highest homeopathic authority, it is said :

"If *two drops* of a mixture of equal parts of alcohol and the recent juice of any medicinal plant, be diluted with *ninety-eight drops* of alcohol, in a phial, capable of containing one hundred and thirty drops, and the whole *shaken twice* together, the medicine becomes exalted in energy to the first development of power, or, as it may be denominated, the first potency. The process is to be continued through *twenty-nine* additional phials, each of equal capacity with the first, and each containing *ninety-nine drops* of spirits of wine ; so that every successive phial, after the first, being furnished with *one drop* from the phial or dilution immediately preceding (which had just been twice shaken), is, in its turn, to be shaken *twice*, remembering to number the dilution of each phial upon the cork, as the operation proceeds. These manipulations are to be conducted thus through all the phials, from the first up to the thirtieth or decillionth development of power, which is the one in most general use."

In a note to this section, a caution is given against shaking the phials more than twice, as a larger number of shakes would increase the potency to a dangerous degree. Medicines which can not be dissolved in alcohol are comminuted to the same degree, by being triturated in a mortar, with sugar of milk. Prepared in this manner, even such commonly inert or harmless substances as salt, charcoal, cuttle-fish, bones, chalk, etc., by these triturations are said to acquire high medicinal potencies.

It is difficult to give an idea of the extent of these dilutions. If a single drop or grain of any medicine were dropped in the reservoir of the Croton aqueduct, a tumbler full from a hydrant would medicate the whole population of New York. The first dilution gives the one-hundredth part of a drop or grain ; the second, the ten-thousandth ; the third, the one-millionth ; the fourth, the one hundred millionth ; the fifth, the ten thousand millionth of a grain or drop. This is to be carried up to the thirtieth dilution, but my pages will scarcely contain the figures necessary to express this quantity, which, as it is inconceivably minute, is well called infinitesimal.

But great care must be taken that even these medicines are not given in too large doses, or too frequently repeated, a common mistake with homeopathic practitioners. Hahnemann's favorite dose was to take one globule of sugar of milk, as large as a pin head or mustard seed, moisten it with the thirtieth dilution or decillionth

of a drop, put it in a phial and let the patient smell of it once, or at most twice, "every fourteen, twelve, ten, eight, and seven days;" and these subtle doses, he assures us (*Organon*, §247) are given "with the best and frequently almost incredible effects."

The operation of these medicines is liable to be interfered with or prevented by tasting or smelling of any substance that can neutralize their virtues, such as the flavors of spices, odors of flowers, tobacco, etc. It is especially necessary that the patient should not be exposed to the smell of an apothecary shop, even at a distance.*

I have but little to say in regard to this system. I have spoken of its evident advantages over the monstrous bleedings and poisonings of allopathy, but I have neither seen nor heard from any reliable authority, any evidence of the power of these medicines, or any effects accompanying their administration, which could not be accounted for by the influence of diet, regimen, faith, hope, perhaps the magnetic influence of a kind physician, and the recuperative powers of nature. I have no idea that the decillionth of a grain of charcoal can do any harm; but if an infinitesimal dose of arsenic or strychnia has any potency, it must be an evil one, and should be avoided.

The influence of faith, in the cure of disease, is well illustrated by a historical account of a circumstance that took place at the siege of Breda, in 1625, as related in *IVES's JOURNAL*.

"That city, from a long siege, suffered all the miseries that fatigue, bad provisions, and distress of mind could bring upon the inhabitants. Among other misfortunes, the scurvy made its appearance and carried off great numbers. This, added to other calamities, induced the garrison to incline toward a surrender of the place, when the Prince of Orange, anxious to prevent its loss, and unable to relieve the garrison, contrived, however, to introduce letters to the men, promising them the most speedy assistance. These were accompanied with medicines against the scurvy, *said to be of great price*, but of still greater efficacy; many more were to be sent them. The effects of the deceit were truly astonishing. Three small phials of medicine were given to each physician. It was publicly given out that three or four drops were sufficient to impart a healing

* Yet we see the professed followers of Hahnemann allowing their patients to use tobacco, drink coffee, and live upon a diet at entire variance with the homeopathic system. In fact, Hahnemann's own example, in respect to tobacco, was inconsistent with his doctrines, for, according to an authorized account of him before me, he fumigated his own patients, and of course neutralized his medicines, by smoking at his consultations.

virtue to a gallon of water. We now displayed our wonder-working balsams. Not even were the commanders let into the secret of the cheat upon the soldiers. They flocked in crowds about us, every one soliciting that part may be reserved for his use. Cheerfulness again appears in every countenance, and a universal faith prevails in the sovereign virtues of the remedies. The effect of this delusion was truly astonishing, for many were truly and perfectly recovered. Such as had not moved their limbs for a month before, were seen walking the streets, with their limbs straight, sound, and whole! They boasted of their cure by the prince's remedy."

All medical history is full of such examples; and there is no doubt that faith, hope, confidence, and enthusiasm, have not only given effect to things quite inert, but that they have also done much to counteract the bad effects of medicinal poisons. But such a plan as this can not be urged to intelligent minds, in favor of any system of drug medication.

The chrono-thermal system, promulgated in London by Dr. Dickson, has been advocated here with great zeal, by Dr. Turner. His book, entitled "The Fallacies of the Faculty," may be read with much advantage. Dr. Dickson's theory is, that all disease is resolvable into a single type, the intermittent, and that it consists essentially of a periodical derangement of temperature, or alternations of fever and ague, heat and cold. Hence the name chrono-thermal, meaning time and heat, or periodicity and temperature. The practice is to cool in the hot stage by emetics and baths, to warm in the cold stage by stimulants and plasters; and to endeavor to break up the recurrence of the fits, by giving such drugs as quinine, opium, arsenic, prussic acid, strychnia, colchicum, nitrate of silver, preparations of mercury, copper, zinc, bismuth, and iron, turpentine, musk, etc. The great value of Dr. Dickson's book is, that it proves the uselessness and terrible murderousness of the lancet, and the common allopathic systems of medication. The use of the cold plunge, shower bath, and douche, will account for much of the success of the system; but its medication is infernal. Its short list of medicines comprises the most frightful poisons of the allopathic materia medica.

The Thomsonian, and other vegetable systems, have their positive and negative virtues; but do not demand any special attention. It is a great mistake to suppose that a vegetable poison may not be as bad as a mineral. On the contrary, several of them are worse than any known mineral preparation

But why, it is asked, did God make all these poisons, if we are not to take them? They were, doubtless, made for some wise purpose, as were all things, but the very fact that they are nauseous poisons, is proof that they were not intended to be put into our mouths or stomachs. When a thing is nauseous, disgusting, and poisonous, we ought to be satisfied that it was not intended for us to swallow. Because we do not know what a thing was made for that is surely no reason that we should eat it.

OF THE WATER-CURE.

I COME now to the history, principles, practice, and results, of the Water-Cure, which I have defined to be the application of the principles of nature in the preservation of health and the cure of disease. It comprehends the maintenance of all the conditions of health, the removal of all the causes of disease, and a thorough and scientific application of proper agents, in assisting the recuperative powers of the vital energy, or principle of life, sometimes termed *vis medicatrix naturæ*.

The agents, constituting the materia medica of Water-Cure, are diet, exercise, recreation, heat, cold, electricity, air, and water in its various uses. These are the positive remedies; the negative consist in the removal of the causes of disease, physical and moral. The proper application of such a system, it will be seen, requires no common degree of wisdom and knowledge.

To a greater or less extent, the Water-Cure has been known from the earliest ages of the world. Wherever men have lived in simple conformity to nature, and in the observance of the rules of cleanliness, they have so far practiced the Water-Cure. It is the system instinctively practiced by the lower animals for the preservation of health and the cure of disease. The birds bathe themselves daily; cattle plunge in the water to cool the fever occasioned by intense summer heats; wounded animals resort to the first stream or pool to bathe the part affected; a horse turned out to die, by his ignorant master, has been known, day after day, to hold his wounded neck under an artificial spout until it was healed, without any other teaching than his own instinct or God-inspired wisdom.

Ancient philosophers, sages, and priests, taught temperance and cleanliness. Moses taught it to the Jews, and Mohammed to the Arabs. Cleanliness is akin to godliness. Purity is one of the doctrines of our religion. The Greeks and Romans knew the effects

of exercise and bathing, and spared no pains to preserve the public health by building costly and magnificent Water-Cure establishments for the people. Pindar says, "the best thing is water, the next gold." Water was recommended by Pythagoras to fortify body and mind. The Macedonian women knew enough of the Water-Cure, in obstetrics, to wash themselves in cold water after childbirth, as the females of the North American Indians do at this day. The hardy inhabitants of ancient Italy immersed their newly-born children in the rivers, and accustomed them to bathe in cold water. Charlemagne encouraged cold bathing throughout his empire, and made swimming one of the amusements of his court. Hippocrates and Galen cured fevers and numerous diseases with water. Dr. Hoyer published a work on the medicinal use of water, in 1702. Dr. Hancock advocated its use in fevers, in 1772. The celebrated John Wesley wrote a valuable work on water treatment, and the work of Dr. Currie, in 1797, is one of the best Water-Cure books extant. I might quote from Richerand, Cullen, Gregory, Rush, Oliver, Johnson, Greville, Zimmerman, Hoffman, Hufeland, and scores more of eminent physiologists and physicians, to prove that, to some extent, the principles of Water-Cure have been recognized by men of science in all times; but this point needs no elucidation.

The world owes the present system of Water-Cure to the genius of Vincent Priessnitz, a peasant of Austrian Silesia. His first cure was of a severe injury upon his own person; a cure so remarkable that it attracted the attention of his neighbors, and he was sought for to give relief to others. In a few years he had a large practice, and was obliged to accommodate patients from a distance. In this simple way began the world-renowned establishment of Grafenberg, which has since numbered thousands of patients, among whom were princes and nobles from all parts of Europe. The astonishing success of the treatment of Priessnitz, chiefly in cases where all other means had failed, not only attracted to him patients from all quarters of the world, but caused similar establishments to be opened in various parts of the continent of Europe, in England, and America.*

A knowledge of the system is now spreading among the people,

* In a Water-Cure periodical before us, we find the advertisements of eleven Water-Cure establishments, most of which are in different sections of the state of New York, not including those in this city.

and it bids fair to take the place of all other systems of medical practice.

But this change is not to be effected without a corresponding effort and struggle. The interests involved are too great not to excite violent opposition. General health, attained by a knowledge of the Water-Cure, will do away in a great measure, with the necessity for a medical profession. The sick will be cured, the cured will keep well, and the well will remain so. A little knowledge will enable people to get well and keep well. Now, in this city alone, more than a million of dollars is paid yearly in doctors' bills, and probably a still larger sum for medicines. It is directly for the interest of our thousand doctors and apothecaries that there should be a great deal of sickness, and very much against their interest that people should take the Water-Cure. They can neither wish nor pray for the blessing of public health, since it would bring ruin and starvation to themselves and their families. With a thousand doctors and druggists; paying two millions of dollars yearly for advice and medicines; with a community full of disease and suffering; a mortality of fifteen thousand a year, half of the victims of which are children, and nearly all in the prime of life, and applying such statistics to all civilized countries, we may well hail the progress of medical reform, and thank Heaven for Preissnitz and the Water-Cure.

As usually happens with great discoveries, this was the result of seeming accident, and was made by the last man, perhaps, that the world would have selected for that purpose. But Providence orders these things well; and a more scientific man would have made a less thorough reformer. A doctor would have brought the prejudices of education into play, and have spoiled his water treatment, by mixing with it poisonous drug medication.*

Preissnitz, in the simple earnestness of his character, has kept clear of all this. A strong common sense, whose results were like intuitions, has been his guide, and when he has committed errors,

* Now that the Water-Cure is becoming fashionable and popular, bidding fair to become universal at no distant period; now that it is the system resorted to and believed in by the most intelligent persons in the community, our doctors, of various schools, who, a short time ago, denounced it, are beginning to say, "Oh! yes, the water; yes, I believe in the water. I have found it very useful in many cases. In fact, we have always known about the use of water. It is an excellent thing in many cases, but it won't answer in yours." And some even go so far as to prescribe a shower bath, to go with their cod liver oil and calomel—almost the only kind of bath that is never used by a Water-Cure physician, and one which few invalids could take without injury,

his experience has corrected them. The system, once established, has doubtless been improved by the science and thought of more cultivated minds.

The Water-Cure consists, as I have said, in the removal of the causes of disease, and in substituting the conditions of health; but it has another work to perform, and in this rests chiefly its claim as a system of medicine. It is not enough to remove the causes of disease; it is not enough to surround a man with the conditions of health. Those causes of disease have produced their legitimate effect, and there exists a condition of pain and suffering, a morbid habit, and deranged functions. A weakened vitality, and a wrecked constitution ask the aid of science to enable nature to do her work.

Disease is a terrible reality; pain must be relieved; obstructions must be removed; the forces of nature must be guided in their action. Nature can maintain health if her laws are not violated; nature can do much to restore, but she is not sufficient without the aid of art. It is the office of Water-Cure to remedy the wrongs done her by false and perverse habits. When a man, by breathing bad air, by eating improper food, by the use of narcotics, and by inattention to cleanliness, has filled his body with disease, and it breaks out in the form of fever, or consumption, or scrofula, or rheumatism, whether it effects the whole system or some particular organ, we must indeed take him out of his bad conditions, and place him in good ones, but we must do much more. We must do something to rouse his vital energy, and strengthen and invigorate his whole system. We must cleanse every pore of his body, and excite his skin to vigorous action, that it may carry on its great work of purification. There is a stomach to be cleansed, and invigorated to perform a healthy digestion, so as to furnish fresh matter to build up the depraved tissues. There is a liver to be waked from its torpidity, and made to perform its office of purifying the venous blood of the portal system; there are kidneys, whose strainers must separate from the vital fluid those effete substances that have been once used, and are now poisons to the animal economy. The whole track of the alimentary canal must be brought into action, by its sympathy with the skin, and all the healthy processes of nature quickened into new life.*

* The extent to which Water-Cure expedites the operations of nature, in the renovation of the system, has been well expressed by the great chemist, Liebig, in his letter to Sir Charles Scudamore. He says: "By means of the Water-Cure treatment a change of matter is effected in a greater degree in six weeks, than would happen in the ordinary course of nature in three years."

This is the work of Water-Cure ; and to do this, to find agents to accomplish these results, all the kingdoms of nature have been ransacked, for her most violent and subtle poisons ; we have seen with what deplorable effects. Yet all this is done with the Water-Cure. Is there fever ? it can be cooled to any desirable point, and the pulse regulated in an inflammatory disease, from hour to hour, with certainty and safety, and without taking a drop of blood, by the various applications of water. Is there local congestion, as of the brain, lungs, liver, etc. ? it can be relieved, and the equilibrium of the circulation established. Is there pain ? the cold bath, and the wet sheet pack are more rapid and efficient than opium in relieving it. Is there inflammation ? * it can be absolutely controlled with water. Is the stomach oppressed ? water is the best of all cleansing emetics. Are there obstructions or constipation of the bowels ? they can be removed quickly, and without pain or danger, by water enemas, and permanently relieved by the sitz bath, and the bandage. Have we debility, a loss of nervous energy, and muscular power ? cold water, in the pack, the plunge bath, and the douche, is the best of tonics. Is the blood filled with impurities ? water is the great cleansing agent of universal nature. Are our solids deprived and loaded with morbid matter ? water, the only solvent in nature, can penetrate through every tissue and wash them from all corruption. Are the nerves loaded with poisons, as of scrofula, psora, or syphilis ? water, taken into the stomach, coursing through every blood-vessel, and passing off by the skin, the lungs, the kidneys, and the intestines, can give them purity and health.

OF THE CONSTITUTION AND PROPERTIES OF WATER.

Yes, all this, and much more, can be done by water, in its thoroughly scientific application.

“What ! water ? simple water ? common water ?

How few have ever rightly considered what this *common water* is !

When oxygen, the vital part of the air, unites with hydrogen, the lightest of known substances, and the first of electro-positive agents, supposed by chemists to be in reality a metal, there is a flash of flame, intense heat, a blaze of light, and the result of this union of these two of the most glorious elements of nature is

* It was formerly thought that a certain amount of inflammatory action was necessary to the reparative processes of nature, but it has been ascertained that they go on much more rapidly and effectually without it. The more healthy the constitution, the less disturbance is occasioned by any injury, and the more quickly is it repaired.

WATER. All the water contained in the vast oceans, the lakes and rivers of the world, all that lies hidden in the bowels of the earth or suspended in the atmosphere, must have been formed by this union of oxygen and hydrogen gasses with the evolution of light and heat, which always accompanies this combustion. This process is continually going on around us. Wherever we see the flame of combustion, from the burning of a taper, to the conflagration of a forest, it is always accompanied with the production of this most wonderful of all the forms of the material world. It exists in invisible vapor in the atmosphere, in clouds, in its liquid state, and in its solid form of ice; each form depending chiefly on its temperature.

Water, wherever we see it, is full of use, and beauty, and glory. From the dew that distils upon the rose leaf, to the ocean that heaves its vast tides around the world, it is a perpetual wonder and delight. In the dawn of creation the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Water makes the beauty of our silvery clouds and golden sunsets, it spans the heavens with the hues of the rainbow, it dances to the earth in April showers, it murmurs in brooks, and thunders in cataracts; it waters the earth in rivers, and bears our navies on the rolling seas.

Look at the relations of water to organic life. Without it, the earth would have for ever remained one mass of barren rock. It was the water that dissolved and disintegrated the primitive granite, and from which were deposited all the subsequent geological formations. Water has given the earth its covering of soil.* Without the presence and action of water, no seed could ever have germinated, and no plant ever have been nourished. It is only by being dissolved in water that the elements of vegetable matter ever take on their beautiful forms. Deprived of water they all droop and wither. And as the whole animal creation lives, directly or indirectly, upon the vegetable, all life is dependent upon water.†

* "That vast expanse of water, the ocean—what recollections, what thoughts it recalls! A poet can never look at it without rapture, nor speak of it without enthusiasm; for it is the breath of God condensed on what were otherwise a cold and barren mass of rock; a breath which has communicated fertility, and beauty, and life."—PROF. DRAFER.

† "No living thing can exist except it contains WATER as one of the leading constituents of the various parts of its system. The distribution of organized beings all over the world, is, to a very great extent, regulated by its abundance or scarcity. It seems as if the properties of this substance mark out the plan of animated nature. From man, the head of all, to the meanest vegetable that can grow on a bare rock, through all the various orders and tribes, this ingredient is absolutely required."—PROF. DRAFER.

But let us look at the relations of water to the human system. The germ of fetal life is little more than a drop of pure water. The new-born infant consists, in all its tissues, of about ninety per cent. of water. Take away water, and all that remains is a few ounces of dust. The adult body is about eighty per cent. water. Water forms about ninety parts in a hundred of the blood, the living fluid which supplies every part with its vitality. Nearly the whole mass of the brain and nerves is pure water. Observe the eye, the most perfect and beautiful of human organs; it is little more than a collection of sacks of transparent water. Evaporate the water from a full grown human body, and its dry solid matter will weigh from thirty pounds to not more than twelve.

But water not only enters thus largely into the composition of the tissues of the human body, but is the grand agent in all its vital functions. Not a particle of nutriment can enter into the composition of the blood, and thence into the various organs, until it is first dissolved in water; and the whole process of digestion is simply a breaking down and comminution to favor that process. It is by water that the system continually receives its new matter, and it is water that continually carries away the old. It passes with the vapor of water from the lungs, with the insensible perspiration from the skin, with the urine from the bladder. Water is the very element of our life. Food is of secondary importance.*

And now, gentle reader, after reflecting upon these truths, and all they must suggest to you, what do you think of "common water?" Is there any drug in the *materia medica* to compare with it? Will you place beside it all the nauseous, poisonous prescriptions of the pharmacopœas? Might we not reasonably expect the living waters, which are to all organic nature the fountain of life, to be also the fountain of health to diseased humanity?

And that they are such, the Water-Cure has proved. Well has water been deemed, in all ages, a sacred element. It is not strange that the Hindoos pay divine honors to the river Ganges; that the Egyptians worship the Nile; that the fountains of Greece were chosen for the sites of temples; that water was the symbol of purification among the Jews, and the element of Christian baptism. We read of the waters of salvation, and the waters of the river of life in paradise. Water is the symbol, throughout the sacred

* "A man of average size requires half a ton weight of water a year; and when he has reached the meridian of life, he has consumed nearly three hundred times his own weight of this liquid."—PROF. DRAPER.

writings, of life, and health, and purity, and holiness. It is the express correspondence of the divine truth, as it is every where the medium of creative power.

OF AIR, DIET, AND EXERCISE.

WATER is the chief, but by no means the sole agent relied upon in the Water-Cure, for the eradication of disease, and the restoration of health. Pure air is of vital necessity ; air free from noxious emanations, foul gases, and diseasing influences, and having its full proportion of oxygen, which, being the chief component of water, is also the vital ingredient of the air. The blood requires, every instant of our lives, to be supplied with a certain proportion of this element. By its union with oxygen, the blood takes on its ruddy, arterial hue. As the oxygen is consumed in the body, the blood becomes dark, as we see it in the veins. Deprive the blood of its supply of oxygen and it ceases to flow, as in drowning or other strangulation. The combustion in this union of oxygen with carbon and hydrogen in the body is the source of vital heat. Pure air, then, is necessary to the vitality of the blood, to the proper nutrition of all the organs of the body, and to the evolution of animal heat. Air, deprived of its due proportion of oxygen, performs this work insufficiently ; air, loaded with poison, carries it into the lungs and depraves the whole system. Consequently an attention to ventilation, especially of sleeping apartments, is an essential part of the Water-Cure treatment.*

Some pathologists contend that there is no such thing as a local disease, except in case of injuries. All disease, they say, is first general, and then local, by showing itself in some organ weaker than the rest. Others, who contend that diseases are both general and local, also admit that in any local affection all the functions are disordered. It is not a question of any practical moment. The central powers of life are those engaged in the function of nutrition, including digestion, circulation, respiration, the deposition of new matter, and the absorption and removal of the old. This function is always deranged in disease, or, as some contend, it is the de-

* Many facts indicate that we breathe, so to speak, by all the million pores of the skin, as well as by the million air cells of the lungs. The contact of fresh air with the skin warms and invigorates, especially if the skin is kept pure and active by bathing. Deprive the skin of access to air, and death is the consequence. In a French spectacle, a little boy was covered with gold leaf, and the result was fatal. Subsequent experiments on animals showed the cause. There is no organ more vital than the skin, and none on which health and disease more closely depend.

rangement of this function which causes all disease. A healthy digestion and pure nutrition are at the foundation of health.

Diet, therefore, is a matter of prime importance in the Water-Cure. As a large proportion of our diseases originate in errors of diet, and are kept up by bad habits of living, its careful regulation is one of the first steps toward a cure. In many diseases, abstinence from food does much toward effecting a cure, but there are others which demand all the nutrition consistent with the strength of the organs.*

I do not propose, in this introduction, to fully discuss the matter of diet. Beyond all question, however, the purest food, and that best adapted to all the wants of man, is furnished by the farinacea, as wheat, rice, barley, Indian corn, rye, oats, etc. Modern chemistry has shown that some of these grains contain exactly the materials required to make the best blood and to nourish every tissue of the body, and in the exact proportions in which they are required. Bread is the staff of life. Then come the fruits, agreeable to the palate and refreshing to the system. Then we have a great variety of roots and edible plants, as potatoes, beets, turnips, carrots, squashes, cabbages, asparagus, etc., and pulse, as beans, peas, and lentils—a variety, from which we may cull and combine the most nutritious, delicate, and healthy dishes. Next in order, come the slightly animalized substances, milk, butter, cheese, and eggs, with shell and scale fish, and then the flesh of birds and the warm-blooded animals. But as the flesh of oxen, sheep, etc., is made from vegetables, we are merely eating grass and grain at second hand, and often, especially if the animal is diseased, with added impurities. Chyle and blood made directly from vegetables resist putrefaction many days longer than that made from a diet of flesh.

The articles prohibited in a Water-Cure diet, either for the preservation of health, or the cure of disease, are all substances absolutely poisonous, as the narcotics, tobacco, coffee, tea, and alcoholic mixtures; all stimulants and condiments, such as pepper, mustard, most of the various spices. Salt, vinegar, and some of the aromatics, are used in moderation. Among the common articles of food, we absolutely prohibit all pork, believing that the laws of Moses and

* A Water-Cure physician of some notoriety has made what is called the hunger-cure so much a hobby, that he neglects some of the most powerful and efficacious of the Water-Cure processes; but judgment and true science avoid the errors of such extremes.

Mohammed, in this respect, were based upon a sound physiology ; all fat meat, blood, and intestines, as the liver, kidneys, etc., believing in the wisdom of the Divine command to the Israelites (Lev. iii. 17). "It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations, throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood." This perpetual statute, being founded in the principles of nature, can not be repealed. We prohibit, also, smoked and manufactured meats, mince-pies, head-cheese and sausages, veal, ducks, geese, and other oily water-fowl, oily fish, all grease and gravies, except butter, or vegetable oil of undoubted purity, and in general all things impure in quality and difficult of digestion ; and in some cases it is necessary to entirely prohibit the use of flesh. The quantity is regulated to the condition and wants of the system.

Exercise is an essential requisite to the cure. Some cases require walking, some riding, and others a course of the most active gymnastics. In distortions of the body, curvatures of the spine, and cases of muscular debility, properly directed exercises have much to do with the cure.

OF PROCESSES, ADAPTATIONS, AND DISEASES.

THE processes of Water-Cure, in the various applications of water, are of considerable number, and require to be greatly varied, and, in some cases of acute disease, adapted, hour by hour, to the condition of the patient. Every variety of disease, general and local, and every variety of constitution and temperament, requires a careful adaptation of the treatment. The same applications that would be of the greatest benefit to a robust man, would not answer at all for a delicate woman or child. The degree of vitality and the reactive powers of each patient, must be estimated with great care, and often tested by repeated experiments. Mistakes have been made in this respect, and mischiefs done, by prescribing the same heroic treatment to patients with all degrees of reactive power. Such practice as this is no better, save in the medicines, than the common routine of allopathy.

The water is used at all temperatures, from the freezing point, and even below it, to as hot as the skin can bear. The temperature is always adapted to the nature of the case, and the constitution of the patient. We use hot fomentations to relieve violent pain or congestion, tepid rubbing baths in fever, and ice-cold applications in uterine hemorrhage. We have plunge baths, pouring baths, sponge baths, dripping-sheet baths, half baths, rubbing baths, and

sitz baths. We have vapor baths and dry blanket packs for profuse sweating, wet-sheet packs, alterative, derivative, and tonic; partial packs for local diseases and low reactive power; and heating and cooling wet compresses and bandages, cold affusion, and that most powerful of all applications, the douche; injections at different temperatures and for various purposes, water emetics, water cathartics, water diuretics, water sudorifics, water rubificants; yes, and if we ever needed them, water epispastics!

Such is a brief and imperfect view of the *materia medica* of hydropathy.

One of the chief objects of this work is, to endeavor to remove the common errors and misapprehensions respecting the adaptation of the Water-Cure to different constitutions and forms of disease. It has been thought that this practice, though adapted to the robust, could not be borne by the delicate; others have thought that, though suited to the delicate, it was not active enough in its operations for the robust. Some have supposed that, while it is well adapted to fevers and other acute forms of disease, it could have little efficacy in chronic and nervous disorders, while a still more general impression has been that though admirably suited to the renovation of worn-out constitutions and the cure of diseases of long standing, it could not be depended upon in sudden emergencies, and in the violent and rapid forms of disease.

One side of all these impressions is true. The Water-Cure, founded in nature, has a wide adaptation to the human system, in all its multiplied forms of disease.* Its processes are greatly varied, and easily adapted to all circumstances. Let me give a few examples. One of the most sudden and terrible of diseases is apoplexy, and the lancet and the most powerful drugs are commonly resorted to for its relief. In many cases, a stroke of apoplexy is a stroke of death. No treatment can relieve it. But whenever it is curable, the most rapid, the most effectual, and every way the best treatment is the Water-Cure. This fact is now recognized by many of the most eminent practitioners of other schools. Pouring

* "You claim too much for Water-Cure," it is sometimes said by those who imperfectly understand it. "You claim that it will cure every thing." No. We claim that it is adapted to the human constitution in every condition of sickness and health; that it will promote the cure of all curable diseases; that it gives relief in all cases, if rightly applied. It not only relieves symptoms, but removes the causes upon which all disease depends. It is useless to give a list of diseases which can be cured by water as all are cured in proportion to their curability. Patients must understand the system, and then they can judge of the universality of its application.

cold water upon the head, says Professor Dickson, will often give relief while the physician is tying up the arm to bleed. It has been demonstrated that, in cases of apoplexy, bleeding is often fatal. The most violent forms of congestive fever I have ever seen, have proved perfectly manageable, and have never lasted beyond a single week, with the Water-Cure. With its use, the inflammatory and exanthematous diseases, as measles, scarlet fever, croup, lung fever, etc., have absolutely lost their terrors. Cases which seemed hopeless, and which have been given up under other systems, have speedily recovered under the applications of Water-Cure. Its success in the cholera is a striking proof of its adaptation to the most violent and commonly fatal diseases.

When the tone of the system is low, when vitality is exhausted, when the nerves are oppressed with morbid matter and drug poisons, as in dyspepsia, and other chronic disorders, the Water-Cure imparts new energy to the vital forces, excites the skin and other depurating organs to cleanse the system of its "perilous stuff," stimulates to a healthy nutrition, and renovates the entire economy. The change is wonderful, and rapid beyond belief. All the processes of life are quickened. Sometimes quinine, mercury, opium, or other drugs, taken years before, are brought out through the pores of the skin, or made to pass off in some salutary crisis. Strange as this may appear, it has been proved times without number, and without the possibility of mistake. There seems to be an entire making over of the system. Freshness comes to the cheek, brightness to the eye, strength to the limbs, and elasticity to the motions. There is appetite for food, vigor for exercise, and keen enjoyment of life. I can refer to such cases in this city, where persons had suffered miserably, for from two to twelve years, under continual medication, and have been restored to sound and vigorous health by Water-Cure. In the "Experience in Water-Cure," elsewhere referred to, several such cases are given.*

The Water-Cure is peculiarly adapted to the cure or eradication of scrofula, in all its forms. We may dispute about the nature and causes of this morbid condition; but there it is. It is hereditary, and almost universal. Its effects are all around us. We see them in eruptions, abscesses, white swelling of the joints, hip-dis-

* It is no uncommon thing for patients who have been bed-ridden for weeks and months, and even years, to be walking about, after a few days of Water-Cure treatment. Few patients think of lying in bed, unless in certain diseases, where absolute rest, for a brief period, is deemed necessary to a cure.

ease, ulceration of the bowels, and consumption. Allopathy treats this disease, or parent of diseases, with its most virulent poisons, arsenic and corrosive sublimate. Its cure, thorough and permanent, is one of the triumphs of hydropathy. Under its genial action the morbid matter is thrown out of the system, by the quiet action of the skin, by eruptions, sometimes by boils, and large abscesses; but the result is purification, and with purity comes health. The consumption is thus often prevented; it is frequently checked in its early stages; I do not wish to task the reader's credulity, but there are many cases in which it has been cured, after giving the most unmistakable signs of its progress. The cough has ceased; the ulcerated lungs have cicatrized; the terrible night-sweats have been checked; the flush of hectic fever has given place to the rosy hue of health; skeleton forms have been clothed with healthy muscles and adipose matter, and persons given up despairingly to die, have enjoyed long years of health and happiness.

Observe, I do not say that this has occurred in a multitude of cases, but I know it has in some. I do not say that the water-treatment, however well managed, will cure every case of well-seated, tubercular consumption; but I do say that there is no case in which it will not afford relief, and where death is inevitable, it undoubtedly prolongs life, assuages pain, promotes the comfort of the patient, and, more than any other mode of treatment, smooths the pathway to the tomb. In the work just referred to, the causes and treatment of consumption have been thoroughly explained by one whose own life has been saved by the treatment, and who has been instrumental in saving the lives of many others.

The facility with which the diseases of the digestive system, whether in the form of dyspepsia, constipation, diarrhea or dysentery, can be controlled and cured by the water-treatment, lies at the foundation of its success in all diseases of the function of nutrition, comprehending by far the greater number of all forms of disease. The intelligent reader will have little difficulty in applying to the treatment of these affections, the general principles of the system.

Not to go over a list of diseases or symptoms to which Water-Cure is adapted, it may be well to show its applicability to a few extreme cases, which may be considered as examples of classes of similar affections. Of diseases of the nervous system, then, take the two cases of delirium tremens and paralysis. The first is an intense and morbid excitement of the nervous system, the latter an extreme prostration. For the former disease our routine doctors

give immense quantities of the terrible poison, opium; for the latter, potent doses of the equally or more terrible poison, strychnia. The opium is given to overpower the disordered brain, induce sleep, and give the system a chance to recover from the effects of disease and medicine; the strychnia, to cure paralysis, by producing convulsions; but generally with a poor effect. In the Water-Cure treatment of delirium tremens, the cold wet-sheet pack coming in contact with the millions of nervous fibers, distributed to the whole surface of the body, soothes the whole nervous system in the most beautiful manner. The pores are opened and the body relieved of its poison by transpiration; a cold bath invigorates the frame, and quickly and surely the cure is accomplished. In paralysis, the shock of the doucho sends a tingling thrill to every nerve, and wakes the dormant powers to action. The system is excited, toned, invigorated, and cleansed of its impurities. The wheels of life are set in motion, and gradually quickened to their normal speed, and gradually, little by little, the paralytic recovers the action of his nerves and the command of his muscles. Epilepsy, St. Vitus' dance, and insanity are all, in many cases, successfully treated.

In one disease, sometimes the punishment of vice but too often the misfortune of innocence, for which mercury has been by many supposed to be a specific, the Water-Cure manifests its cleansing and curative power in an extraordinary degree. I have found that, in the cure of nearly all diseases, the water treatment brings out much foul matter through the pores of the skin. It is manifest to the senses of sight and smell, and its peculiar character can often be distinguished. The odors of typhus fever, of rheumatism, and of gout are all peculiar; so are the medicinal substances, which for years, perhaps, have been lurking in the system. But whatever may be thought of other diseases, in syphilis, whether a recent affection, one of long standing, or a hereditary taint, no one can doubt that there is an absolute poison, a real virus, which nature often tries to cast out of the system by ulcers, cutaneous eruptions, and other tendencies to the surface. Mercury was once thought to be an antidote to this poison. That idea is now abandoned; but it is supposed that by poisoning the patient with mercury, a great effort will be made, and that in casting out one poison the other will go with it. This sometimes *seems* to be the actual effect produced; but in many cases, the poison of the mercury is added to that of the syphilis, and both remain in the system. It is hard to say

which is worse, but both together are truly horrible. Now, if there is any thing in the whole range of nature that will wash both these poisons completely out of the human body, it is the Water-Cure. Wherever there is vitality enough remaining to act upon, both syphilitic and mercurial diseases can be cured fully and completely by this method.

The Water-Cure is said to have succeeded, in Germany, in the cure of hydrophobia. If so, it is the only treatment that has ever cured, and if I had a case, I should certainly resort to it. I see no good reason to doubt its efficacy. Indeed, I can not conceive of any diseased condition of the human system, where the Water-Cure would not be better than any other known system of medication. I except, of course, cases of poisoning, where chemical reagents can be used to neutralize the poison, as albumen for corrosive sublimate, or the hydrated peroxide of iron for arsenic; and, also, injuries, aneurisms, etc., requiring surgical operations.

And here let me say, that in saving parts from violent inflammations and consequent mortification; in saving limbs from the necessity of mutilation; in discussing tumors, and eradicating various surgical diseases; in the prevention and cure of those terrors of surgery, tetanus and erysipelas; in preparing patients to endure operations, and in the after treatment, the Water-Cure is destined to win even greater honors than even in the cure of diseases falling under medical treatment. Our surgeons have yet to find the uses of water, and to know that all their lotions, poultices, and embrocations are good only as water makes a part of them, and that they are very mean and poor compared with the scientific application of the pure element.*

The use of the Water-Cure in the cure of neuralgia, tic-doloureux, rheumatism, gout, sick headache, and other painful nervous disorders, need not be dwelt upon. The cases of relief are so numerous, that there can be very few who have not had some within the sphere of their own personal observations.

* It must be expected that Water-Cure, like any other system, is liable to suffer from the errors of its practitioners. The ignorance of some, the prejudices others, timidity on the one hand and rashness on the other, may prevent the proper effects of this mode of treatment, and even lead to serious mischief. When a Water-Cure physician has no more judgment than to apply the same heroic treatment to a delicate woman, or a child just sinking from exhaustion, that would be just the thing for a strong man in a high fever, what can we expect? Even injudicious and routine water-treatment is doubtless better than drug medication, but true science, judgment, and skill, are needed, to do justice to the system and those who seek its aid.

OF FEMALE DISEASES, GESTATION, AND CHILDBIRTH.

BUT there is one class of diseases to which the adaptation of the Water-Cure ought every where to be known, and no false delicacy will atone to my conscience for not giving them the prominence they deserve. I allude to the diseases of women. Women are sadly subject to all the diseasing influences of civilization. Especially do they suffer from want of out-door exercise, bad air, enervating indulgences, and errors in dress. With great nervous susceptibility, their reproductive systems are highly developed, and here, in most cases, when disease exists, will it be found established. In consequence, physicians are called to prescribe for menstrual irregularities, morbid discharges, displacements of the uterus, and many painful affections. For all these, medicines and all the usual modes of treatment fail, or worse than fail; but, as the reader will have anticipated, if he has understood the principles I have advanced, these diseases are such as yield readily and certainly to the Water-Cure. Women, if no others, have cause to bless the genius of Preissnitz! Medicines mock the patient with a temporary palliation of symptoms, but in the end the disease is aggravated. The Water-Cure gives complete relief.

I have left to the last what is to me the most interesting and, perhaps, the most important of all the results of Water-Cure; I mean its use in gestation and childbirth; and were I not supported by an abundance of facts and experience I should feel that I put my reputation in peril by the statements I am about to make. Childbirth is the terror of the female sex, in civilized countries, from its pain and danger. It is not so with the simple children of nature, with whom it is attended by neither pain nor peril. Under the blessings of the Water-Cure, by a judicious course of treatment, woman may be so prepared and strengthened, and so assisted in the progress of labor, and at its termination, as to make the process almost or entirely painless, and almost wholly free from dangerous consequences. This is done by giving tone to the nervous system, and making the reproductive organs perfectly healthy. When this is done, the contractions of the uterus have no more pain than those of a healthy stomach or bladder. Mrs. Gove Nichols states in her "Experience" that the duration of labors, under her care, has been from twenty minutes to four hours and a half. Ladies who had formerly suffered inconceivably forty-eight hours, have been delivered under her care in one hour, and

in several cases in a few minutes ; often with pain so slight as to be scarcely noticed. But in these cases there must be preparatory treatment. The children, born under these circumstances, are remarkably robust and healthy. In her tract, "The Water-Cure," Mrs. Nichols says :

"The writer has had a large obstetric practice for several years, and has never had a patient who was not able to take an entire cold bath, and sit up and walk, the day after the birth of a child. I need not say, that life would often be the forfeit of even rising from the bed at an early period after delivery, where patients are treated after the old methods. The water-treatment strengthens the mother, so that she obtains a great immunity from suffering during the period of labor, and enables her to sit up and walk about during the first days after delivery. In all the writer's practice, and in the practice of other Water-Cure physicians, she has never known an instance of the least evil resulting from this treatment."

This subject is of such momentous interest, and so new withal ; women are so incredulous of what seems to them miraculous, though it is perfectly natural, and in conformity with all the principles of true science, that I will give another brief extract, from the same writer, in the April number of the WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

"I have been very much gratified with several births that have recently come under my care. One young lady, who was really far from being strong, but who had been living very carefully on Water-Cure principles through her pregnancy, encouraged and supported by a strong, earnest husband, suffered slightly one quarter of an hour. Another, with a first child, and whose friends frightened her all in their power, took the cure under my care, and when she was delivered she could hardly be said to suffer at all. I was uncertain whether the expulsive efforts were accompanied by pain. I said, after the birth, 'were these efforts painful?' She hesitated, and then said, '*slightly*.' The same day she sat up and held her babe, and said she felt *well*.

"Another, the last case I had. The babe was born with three expulsive efforts, each of which was somewhat painful. *This was all*. The lady was up the day after the birth, and about house, as usual, in a week."

And these, I can assure the reader, are but samples of many cases of a similar character. Have I not properly described the Water-Cure as a comprehensive system, extending through the whole domain of human disease and suffering ? I have done so con-

scientifically ; the reader must judge with what capacity of forming a correct judgment.*

OF THE MEANS OF TREATMENT.

How shall the patient reap the greatest advantage from the Water-Cure ? Doubtless, by going to some Water-Cure establishment, in whose physician he has confidence, and giving all his time and attention to the cure. In this course there are several advantages. There is change of scene, relief from customary labors and anxieties, the encouragement of companionship, etc. But some of these establishments are distant ; others are expensive. Invalids dislike to be separated from their relatives and friends, and to be deprived of the kindness and care which no money can purchase.

In this city, and wherever there are Water-Cure establishments, persons are taken as day patients ; who, residing at their own houses, come regularly to the Water-Cure house for advice, packs, douches, and such of the applications as can not be conveniently made elsewhere. They have in this way the advantage of riding or walking, and the excitement of a visit, with all desirable treatment ; without leaving home, and in many cases, with but little interruption to their customary employments.

But there is no reason why people should not take the Water-Cure at home, when desirable, as well as submit to any other medical treatment. All our best houses are furnished with baths, and it will not be long before no house will be considered tenable without one. Even in the country, it will take but a little expense or trouble to fit up a Water-Cure apparatus that will answer all necessary purposes. A tub or trough, which any carpenter can make, will answer for a plunge bath, and one or two pails will form a pouring one. A douche is simply a stream of water falling from the height of a few feet ; and a sitz bath, is a half filled wash-tub. Wherever there is pure cold water, I would engage to give the

* This, it must be remembered, is intended as an *introduction* to Water-Cure, and by no means a full account of it. Those who are interested in the subject, will find further information in the works of Gully, Wilson, Johnson, Francke or Rousse, Horsel, Munde, Houghton, Shew, and others. Ladies will find the published lectures of Mrs. M. S. Gove Nichols, and her "Experience in Water-Cure," of great advantage. The latter has been pronounced by very competent judges the best work yet written on the subject, and it is unquestionably the one best adapted to the wants of females.

Water-Cure. A pouring bath, a dripping sheet, a sponge or towel bath, a sitz bath, a wet sheet or blanket pack, can be taken any where. It is certainly best to have all the conveniences of a Water-Cure establishment, but no one should go without the treatment for the lack of these. Water is everywhere; and there are no insurmountable difficulties in its application.

I trust that the time is not distant when we shall have Water-Cure hospitals and dispensaries, where the poor can be treated at prices within their means, or where they are not able to pay at all, gratuitously.

A WORD OF CAUTION.

I HAVE more than once intimated, in the preceding pages, that the practice of Water-Cure is liable to errors and abuses. When a new system becomes popular, it is liable to be taken up by the unqualified and incompetent, as "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." In all schools of medicine people intrust the care of health and life to men to whom they would not intrust their property. Water-Cure is no more likely to be exempt from ignorance and a mercenary spirit than any other system, and from these no system is free. With every day's increasing popularity of this mode of treatment, will increase this danger. It is inevitable that Water-Cure must sometimes fall into the hands of empirics and quacks; as it is notorious that what is called the regular profession is full of such.

I have endeavored to show briefly, indeed, but I trust not the less clearly, that the proper application of the Water-Cure demands of the practitioner a profound knowledge of the human system, its diseases, the causes which produce them, the process of cure, and the means by which that process may be brought about. A diseased human system is not a thing to be trifled with, or treated with blind ignorance. The powerful processes of the Water-Cure demand science, judgment, and skill, in their application. In many cases their power to cure, if rightly used, corresponds to their power to injure if misapplied. In hundreds and thousands of cases, by the admissions of the doctors themselves, patients have been killed outright by the poisons of allopathy. It is not strange that the mistakes of Water-Cure physicians should sometimes be fatal. I have an unaffected admiration for the genius of Preissnitz, but it is not to be denied that he has sometimes made fatal mistakes in his practice which a thorough education might have prevented.

Yet, curiously enough, a flying visit to Grafenberg has been thought an important qualification to a Water-Cure physician!

That I may not needlessly alarm the timid and deter the afflicted from seeking relief, I will specify some of the cases in which errors in Water-Cure may be attended with mischief. In all consumptive cases great care must be taken to adapt the degree of cold to the reactive power of the patient. In dysentery of a low type, very cold water applied to the surface, may increase the congestion of the inflamed organ. In diseases of the heart and in cases of tendency to apoplexy, the more powerful of the Water-Cure processes must be ventured upon with great caution. The treatment of pneumonia or lung fever, when violent, is a matter of some delicacy, Where uterine hemorrhage has produced excessive weakness, the Water-Cure may be the only hope, if properly applied; if applied recklessly, it may increase the danger. In aged and infirm persons, with a tendency to eruptive disease, there is danger from too violent treatment, the use of too cold water tending to produce uncontrollable crisis; and where cold foot baths are much used in such cases, they may produce obstinate ulcers. In congestion of the lungs, a cold sitz bath may produce fatal hemorrhage. In scrofulous disease of the viscera, congestions may be produced by ignorant and empirical treatment. In obstetric cases, the vanity of getting a patient up quickly may lead to unpleasant consequences; and the use of the cold sitz bath without the vagina syringe may be prejudicial, when there is congestion of the uterus and low reactive power. In short, the very power which water has to cure the disease may, by ignorance, be turned against the patient. The difference between Water-Cure and allopathy, in this respect, is, that while the former, in incompetent hands, may be injurious in some cases, the latter, in any hands, can hardly fail to do more or less injury in all. Competent physicians and intelligent patients will, I trust, appreciate my motives in making these remarks. To some they may seem impolitic; but the true interests of Water-Cure do not require concealment or misrepresentation, nor will they ever be safe in the hands of routine, ignorant, and empirical practitioners.*

* I do not wish it to be understood that I think no man can practice Water-Cure who has not received a regular medical education. I have seen too much of medical students and medical professors to have any very lofty idea of their inevitable wisdom. What I wish to assert is, that a man should have knowledge and judgment; I care not how or where he gets them.

THE PLEASURES OF WATER-CURE.

To persons of diseased nervous systems, the Water-Cure seems a chilly and disagreeable business; but they soon change their opinions. After the momentary shock of the cold bath, comes a delightful feeling of glowing invigoration. After the first chilling five minutes in the wet-sheet pack, there comes a calm, soothing, and delicious repose, and often sound and refreshing sleep. Coming from the douche, a patient feels like jumping over fences. With a Water-Cure appetite, the simplest fare is eaten with the greatest zest, while the air, exercise, a purified system, and the consciousness of returning health, give elasticity to the spirits, and continual enjoyment. I have never seen happier persons than those who were recovering from long, miserable diseases, under the Water-Cure. As melancholy, petulance, and despondency come from disease, they fly at its cure, and give place to buoyant hope and serene happiness. In Water-Cure, we escape nauseous drugs, tormenting blisters, and disgusting setons; we enjoy cleanly and refreshing baths; above all, we lay the foundation of all happiness, in a renovated constitution and vigorous health.

CONCLUSION.

THERE may arise a question as to the motives which have induced me to write and publish this work. I will frankly avow them. I have devoted my life, to such extent as it may please Providence, to the work of healing the sick, and hope that this pamphlet will aid me in that purpose, by calling attention to the system I have endeavored to explain, and whose merits are becoming every day more widely appreciated. It is my desire to do all in my power, not merely to cure the sick, but to prevent sickness by promoting the public health, and I know of no more efficient way of doing this, than by extending a knowledge of the principles of Water-Cure, which are those of health. This system is based upon the laws of life, and an observance of those laws will secure the health of the community.

Doubtless the publication of this work may be of some personal advantage. It can scarcely fail to increase my work, and correspondingly its emoluments; but there is a satisfaction in thinking that a thorough and competent Water-Cure physician earns his money, and that his patients get the worth of theirs, in what is above all price. The system is one of singular economy. The

medicine costs nothing, and neither prolongs a disease nor prepares the way for a new one. Health, once thoroughly gained, is accompanied by the knowledge of the way to preserve it, and Water-Cure patients often become their own physicians. Mothers, especially, learn to treat their children. In a mercenary point of view it is a bad system for the medical profession, and will, doubtless, put an end to it as soon as the world gets some wiser ; but we have the consolation of knowing that what, in a low sense, is bad for us, is, in the highest sense, good for the world.

My past and future labors must be the test of my sincerity and zeal in the health reform, which I hold to be at the basis of all reforms, and the first right step to be taken in our progress to that state of universal happiness and peace which may God hasten.

THE END.

A NEW WORK ON WATER-CURE.

FOWLERS AND WELLS have just published

"Experience in Water-Cure,

A Familiar Exposition of the Principles and Results of Water Treatment, in the Cure of Acute and Chronic Diseases, illustrated by numerous cases in the practice of the author; with an Explanation of Water-Cure Processes, Advice on Diet and Regimen, and Particular Directions to Women in the Treatment of Female Diseases, Water Treatment in Childbirth, and the Diseases of Infancy. By Mrs. MARY S. GOVE NICHOLS, Water-Cure Physician, Author of Lectures to Ladies on Anatomy and Physiology, etc." Price 25 cents, mailable.

Among the notices of the press, the following are selected.

AN INVALUABLE BOOK.—In recommending to all our readers, who have not already done so, to buy the little work on Water-Cure, by Mrs. Mary S. Gove Nichols, of New York, we know we are doing them a service. Mrs. Nichols is a woman of sound mind, acute sense, great discretion, and a warm, earnest, benevolent heart. Her success in the treatment of disease has been very marked and encouraging, and in this little work she tells her experience for the benefit of mothers, and mankind generally. We wish it a universal circulation, as being on the whole the best practical Water-Cure book extant.—*Boston Chronotype*.

This is the testimony of a sincere, devoted, and exemplary woman, seeking to benefit and instruct her race. Every page is characteristic of the disinterestedness of the author, and presents indubitable evidence of the worth of Water-Cure. We recommend it with confidence to the public as a highly useful and entertaining as well as truly instructive work.—*New England Washingtonian*.

Here is another of a class of books of a recent date, which, if we are not much mistaken, are destined to effect a complete revolution in the practices of society. The author is a female, and the work is mainly devoted to the interests of females, and ought to be in the hands of every woman in the land. It can be got through the mail, and the price of it is as nothing, when compared with the amount of valuable, practical, every-day information it contains upon subjects the most important, in regard to which there is still a frightful amount of ignorance.—*Good Samaritan*.

This is a very interesting report of cases treated by the author; the principles and results of her practice in acute and chronic diseases. Her reasoning is clear and forcible, and she betrays what she possesses in an eminent degree, the independence and self-possession which results from buoyant energies, successful experience, and an earnest philanthropy. We could wish every wife and mother to possess it.—*Windham Co. Democrat*.

This is the most valuable, because the most practical, of all the books that have been written on the interesting subject of Water-Cure. It is the result of Mrs. Nichols' own experience in the treatment of the various diseases which have come under her own immediate practice, during a residence of several years in the city of New York as a Water-Cure physician. It is a work of great value to all, and especially to females, who will derive great instruction and benefit from its perusal. Written by a woman, and by one thoroughly acquainted with anatomy and medicine, having studied them for a long series of years, a woman familiar with the Latin and French languages, and, therefore, capable of understanding the abstruse terms of the medical art, and one who has a passion for the science, and a peculiar tact in its practice, she addresses herself to woman in a language that will be understood and felt, and gives instructions which may be readily reduced to practice. We advise all who value their health and happiness, and that of their children, their families, and friends, to furnish themselves with a copy of this valuable work.—*Boston Mail*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Filled with much useful information on the subject of health and disease, being evidently the result of much experience and close observation. The talented author appears to be fully persuaded of her mission to humanity, and applies her gifts with the zeal of a true medical reformer and philanthropist. She does her own thinking and practice without so much as saying to the faculty, "By your leave, gentlemen." May success attend her efforts to diffuse light, and truth, and health among the suffering masses, especially those of her own sex, for whom she particularly labors and sympathises; and may God speed the day when every female in our land and world shall have a correct theory of human life in all its bearings, and as practical a knowledge of the use of the great agents of nature, in preserving that life and rendering it a blessing, as Mrs. Nichols. I can cheerfully recommend her book to the perusal of all classes, especially mothers; and doubt not many will be made wiser and happier by it.—*Med. Corres. of the Practical Christian.*

Mrs. Gove Nichols' "Experience in Water-Cure," is a work that ought to be in every family. She is a very clear and intelligent writer, and has had large experience.—*Eastern Argus.*

This is beyond all comparison, the most interesting work on Water-Cure we ever read. The author, whether right or wrong in her opinions, appears to be one of those noble-minded women, whose mission it is to alleviate the miseries of our fallen humanity. She, herself, has perfect faith in the Water-Cure, and believes it a panacea for almost, if not entirely, all the "ills that flesh is heir to." And she is not a mere theorist—she is daily moving among cases of disease, and the most valuable part of the small, but impressive volume before us, is the record of her own experience. In relation to the use of water, in childbirth, she makes some very remarkable statements.—*Phila. Saturday Post.*

Its author has had great success as a Water-Cure physician, and the results of her experience, here recorded, are full of valuable information.—*Portland Transcript.*

The author, whether right or wrong, is one who thinks that her mission is to instruct and help woman. We commend the book to the attention of all, particularly the afflicted of her own sex.—*Chester Revueille.*

WATER-CURE HOUSE.

THOMAS L. NICHOLS, M. D., AND MARY S. GOVE NICHOLS,
Water-Cure Physicians, wish to apprise their friends and the public, that they have removed to a more eligible, convenient, and accessible residence,
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Near the Sixth Avenue, in the center of the most beautiful and salubrious "up-town" portion of New York, within a few minutes walk of Union, Madison, and Grammercy parks, and the Distributing Reservoir, and close by the Sixth, and only a block from the Seventh Avenue. Broadway, and Bloomingdale stages.

At this house, combining the advantages of country air with a city residence, Dr and Mrs. Nichols will receive patients for full board and treatment, for day treatment, and for consultations and examinations. Patients also visited and treated at their residences. Professional visits made within a reasonable distance, and the principles of Water-Cure applied to every department of medicine, surgery, and obstetrics.

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